

March 13, 2003

To: NITC Commissioners
From: Anne Byers
Subject: Community Council Report

Community IT Planning and Mini Grant Program Update

In partnership with the University of Nebraska and Technologies Across Nebraska, the NITC Community Council has been working with 8 Nebraska community and regional groups to develop local technology plans. Midway through the project, we are already starting to see results.

Alliance. The Alliance area technology committee is completing an initial assessment and is developing a community survey.

Brown/Keya Paha/Rock Counties. This regional group has completed an initial assessment and has held three community forums. A community survey is currently being developed.

Crawford-Harrison. The Crawford-Harrison group has conducted a community technology survey and completed an engineering study. This information was used to prepare an application for the RUS Community Connect Broadband Grant program.

Custer County. An e-commerce workshop was held on January 21. The workshop also served as a forum for soliciting input from businesses on technology needs. The group will be completing their assessment and plan in the next few months.

Edgar. The Edgar group has worked the Center for Rural Research and Development at UNK to conduct a community needs assessment. The results of the needs assessment will be presented at a town hall meeting on March 25.

Fillmore County. A community survey found that 75% of the households and 97% of businesses had a computer. There is a strong demand for computer training in the area. The group is finishing up their assessment and will begin preparing a plan.

West Point Area. In northeast Nebraska, West Point and ten surrounding communities are working to develop individual technology plans and a regional plan. Participation in the IT planning process has helped community members organize and effectively communicate their needs with potential providers. The West Point area group is currently working with two providers to deploy fixed broadband wireless in West Point,

Oakland, and the Bancroft/Pender area. The group is planning to use their mini grant to conduct an engineering study.

York. The York IT committee is completing their initial assessment and recently toured the Aurora Technology Center.

Each community and regional group is expected to have their technology plans completed by May 31, 2002.

New Member Nominations and Membership Renewals

The Community Council has five new member nominations and eight membership renewals.

Community Technology Fund Grant Request

In order to continue the IT Planning and Mini Grant program a second year with another 8 communities, the Community Council is requesting funding through the Community Technology Fund.